



# *Building Trades 2012 Member Research Study*

Report March 2012

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Report March 2012

We are proud to present you with this research report, which was produced under the stringent quality standards of our company and those of the Marketing Research and Intelligence Association (MRIA). We are confident that this report will address your concerns and we hope to have the privilege of serving you again in the near future.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Jean-Marc Léger'.

Jean-Marc Léger  
President

**The largest  
Canadian-owned  
marketing research  
and polling firm**

# CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

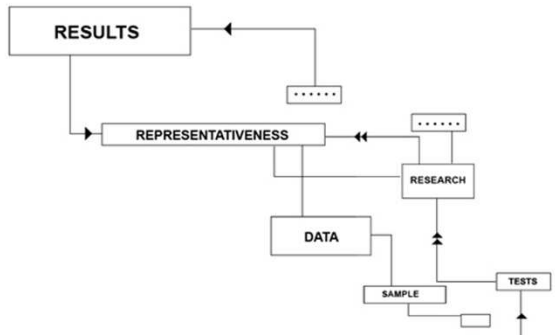




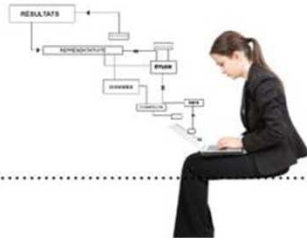
## CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES



- Recently, there has been a proposal for a Private Members' Bill being introduced in the Canadian Parliament called Bill C- 377 Public Financial Disclosure for Labour Organizations. Among other things, under this bill, every labour union in Canada will be required to file financial information to the federal government each year.
- In February 2012, Leger Marketing was contracted by Building and Construction Trades Department – AFL-CIO to survey union members across Canada to gauge their perceptions about this proposed Private Members' Bill. Specifically, the survey ...
  - Measured the support for the proposed bill among Building Trades union members and their understanding of the different aspects of the bill
  - Measured the extent to which unions members are currently aware of / access financial information about their unions



# RESEARCH METHODS



## RESEARCH METHODS



### Data Collection

- 735 interviews with members of the various building trades unions across Canada using a list provided by the Building And Construction Trades Department (AFL-CIO). Based on the contact details available in the lists, Leger conducted the interviews via telephone or online as applicable.
- The sample was distributed by the various Building Trades unions
- Interviews were conducted between February 14<sup>th</sup> and March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012.

### Target Respondents

- Building Trades Union Members across Canada

### Statistical Reliability

- The margin of error on a sample size of 735 is  $\pm 3.6\%$  19 times out of 20.



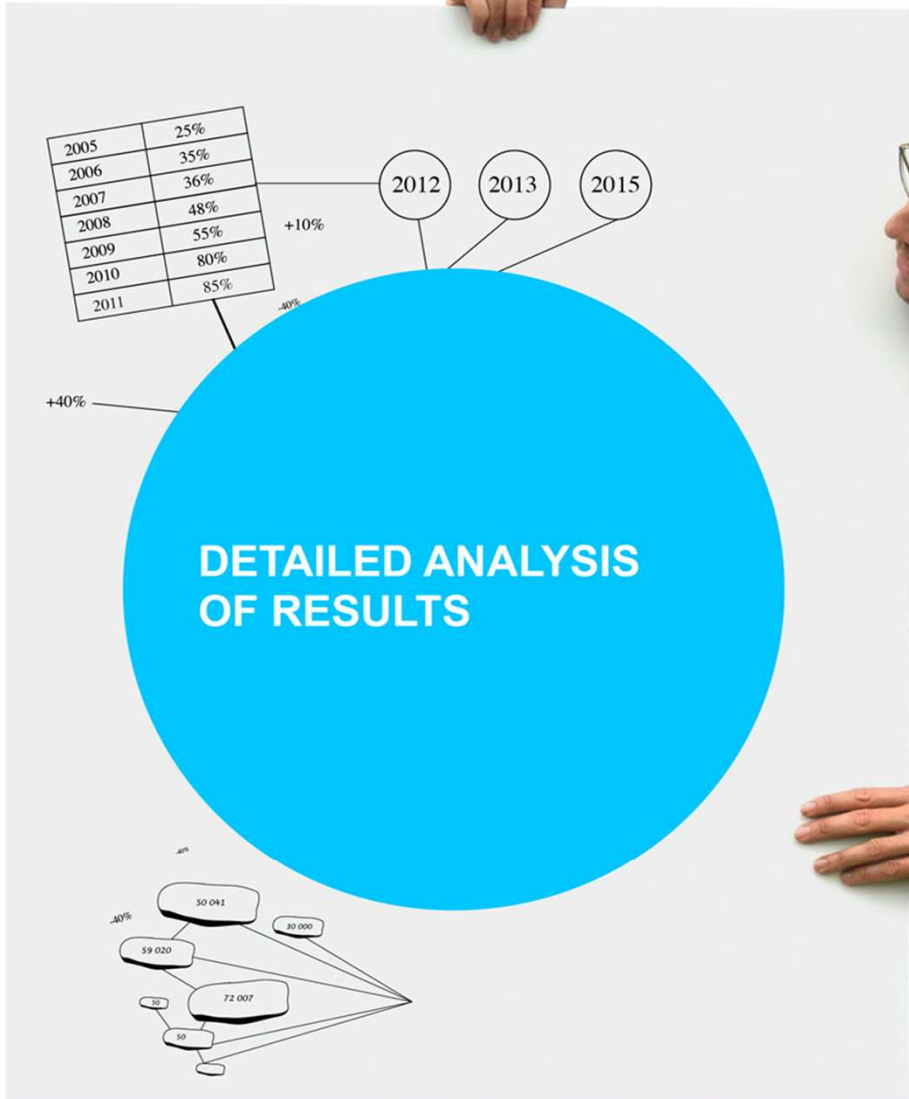
## KEY INSIGHTS



## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS



- There is clearly strong opposition to the proposed Bill C-377 among members of the Building Trades Unions.
- While only about one third of the members are aware of Bill C-377, once made aware of the proposed financial disclosure rules for unions, three quarters do not feel the bill is necessary.
- There is a strong sense of unfairness associated with the Bill, particularly around its limited focus on unions and their requirements to publicly disclose their financial information . Most members are familiar with, and satisfied with the current requirements (to disclose to members) and there is a strong sense that the practice is already fair and transparent.

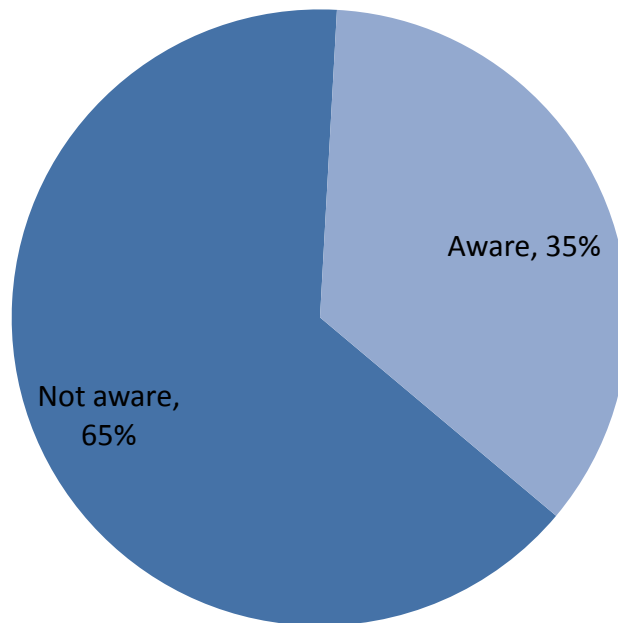




## UNAIDED AWARENESS OF THE BILL



*Q1: There has been a proposal for a Private Members' Bill being introduced in the Canadian Parliament called Bill C- 377 Public Financial Disclosure for Labour Organizations. Before today, were you aware of this bill?*



Base: Members ( n=735 )

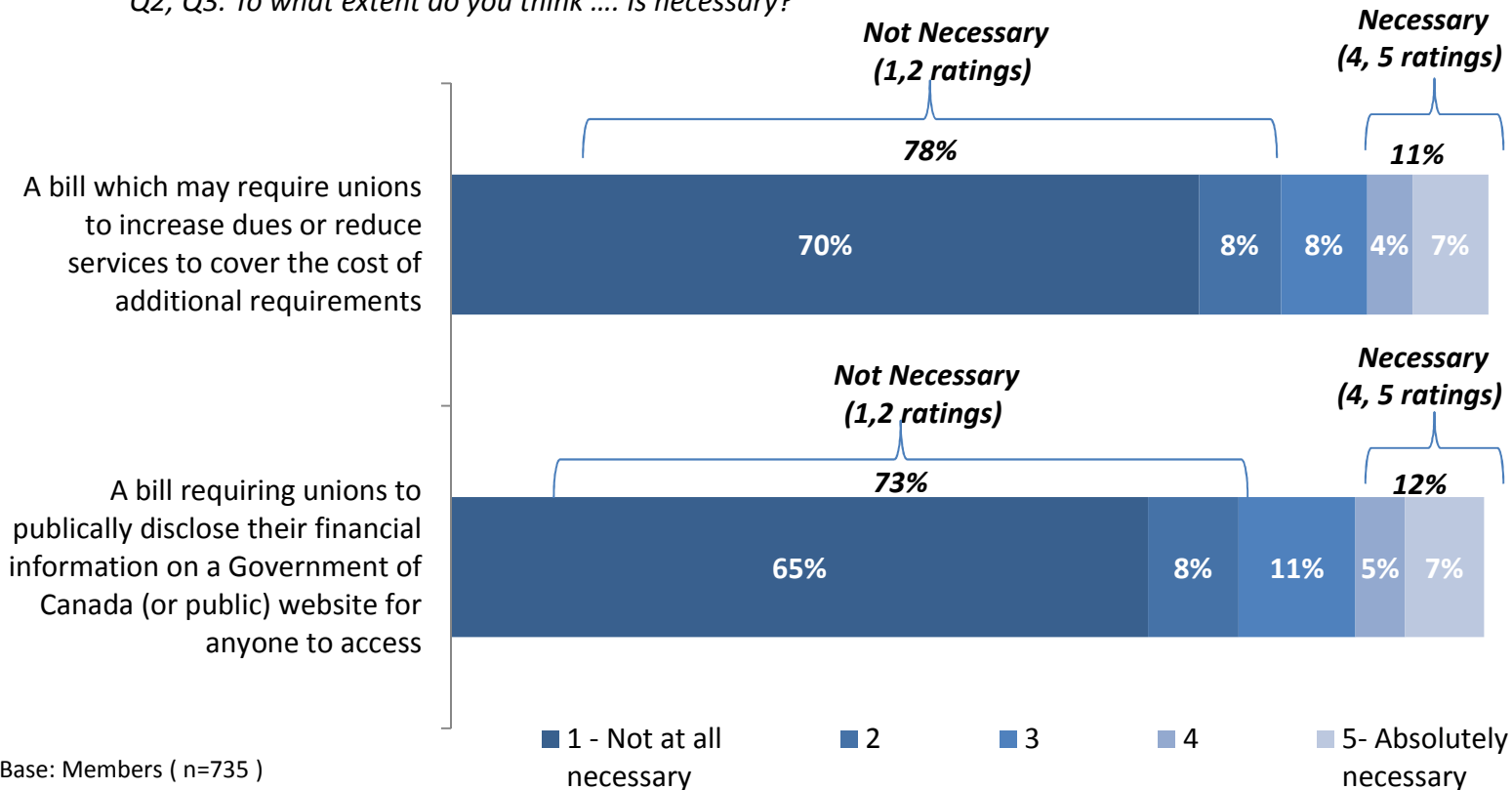
One – third (**35%**) of the union members surveyed are aware of the proposed Private Members' bill.



## NEED FOR HAVING THE BILL



Q2; Q3. To what extent do you think .... Is necessary?



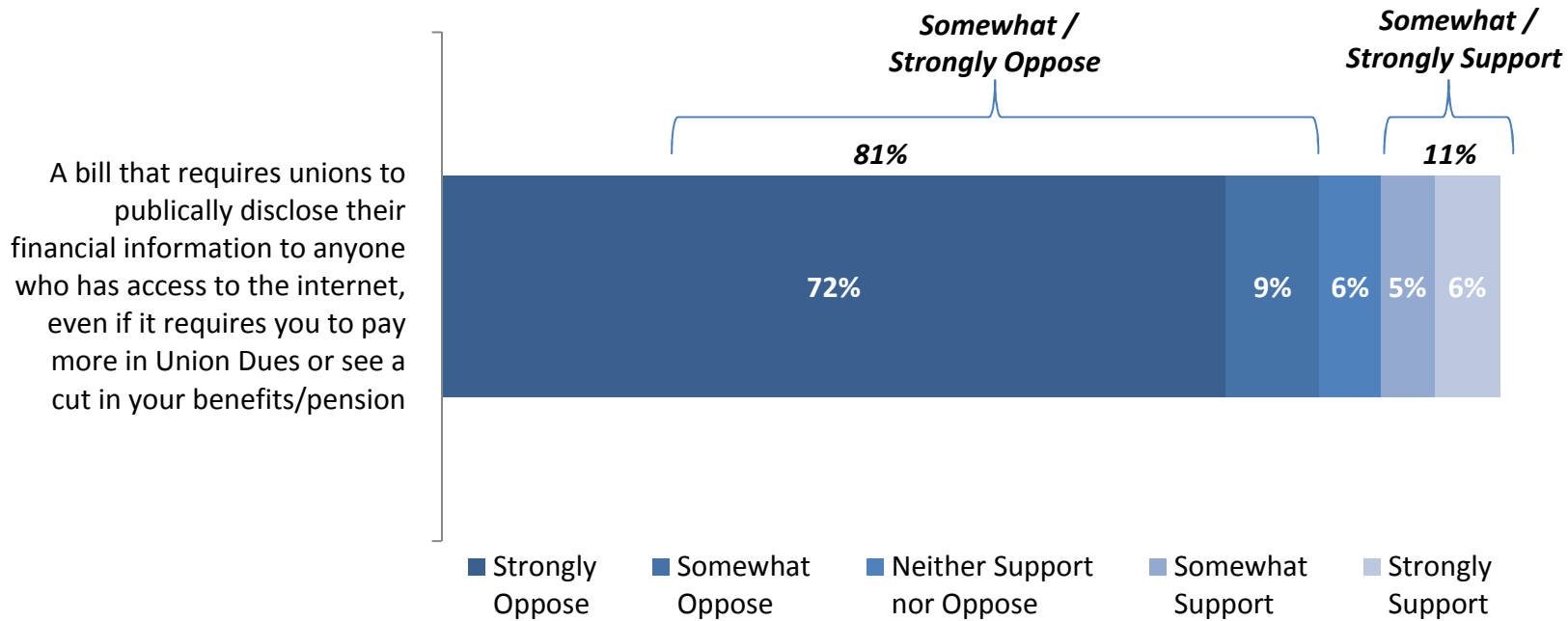
The vast majority (**70%**) of union members feel that a bill which may require unions to raise their dues or reduce services to provide for the commitments of the bill is **not necessary at all** .  
 The majority (**65%**) of union members also think that a bill which will require unions to publically disclose their financial information is **not necessary at all**.



## SUPPORT FOR THE BILL



Q4. And to what extent would you support or oppose ...



Base: Members ( n=735 )

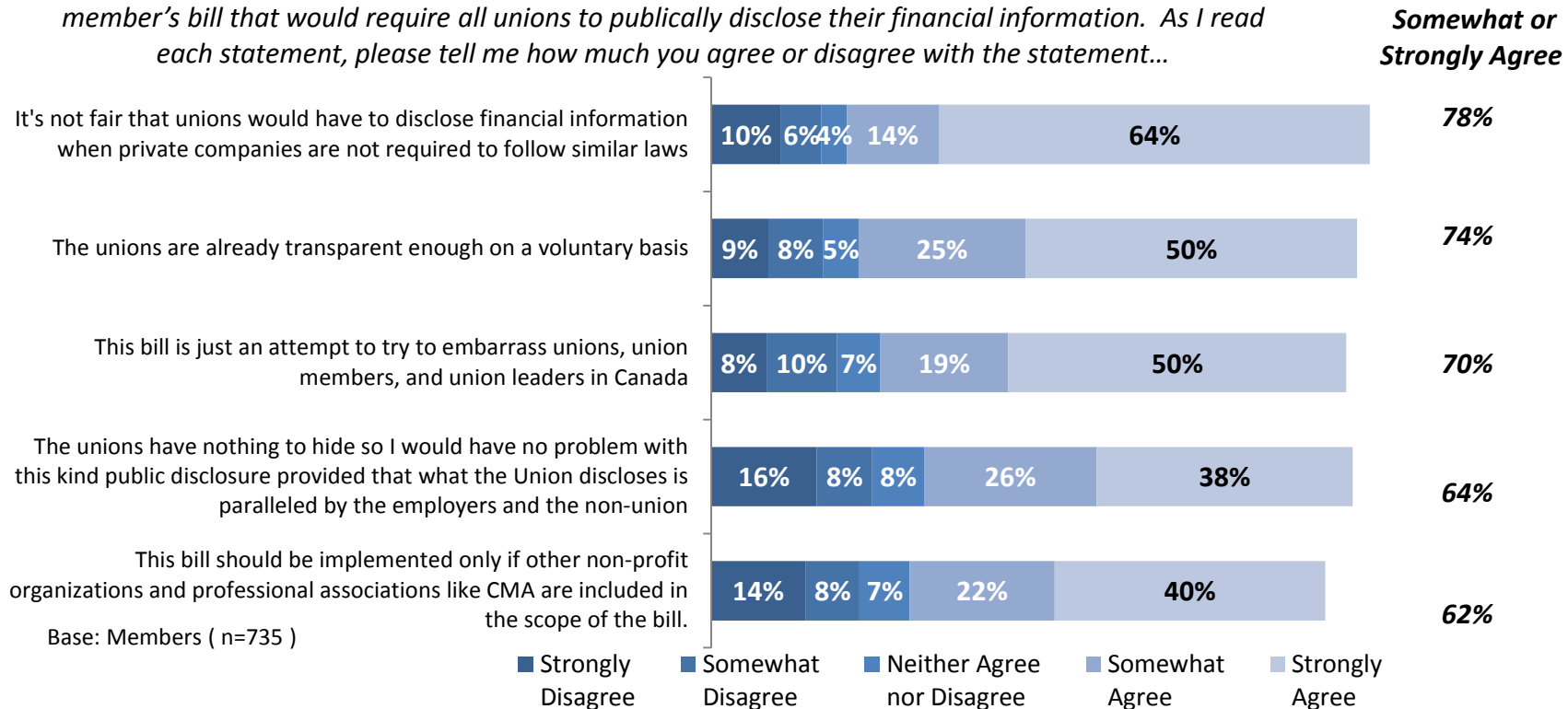
The vast majority (**81%**) of union members **oppose** the proposed bill, with the majority (**72%**) **strongly opposing** the proposed bill.



## OPINION ABOUT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BILL



*Q5. I am going to read you some statements made by some people about this proposed private member's bill that would require all unions to publically disclose their financial information. As I read each statement, please tell me how much you agree or disagree with the statement...*



The majority (**78%**) of union members agree its not fair for unions to be required to publically disclose their financials as the members think (**74%** agree) the unions are already transparent enough. They also feel (**70%** agree) that the bill is an attempt to embarrass union members and unions leaders.

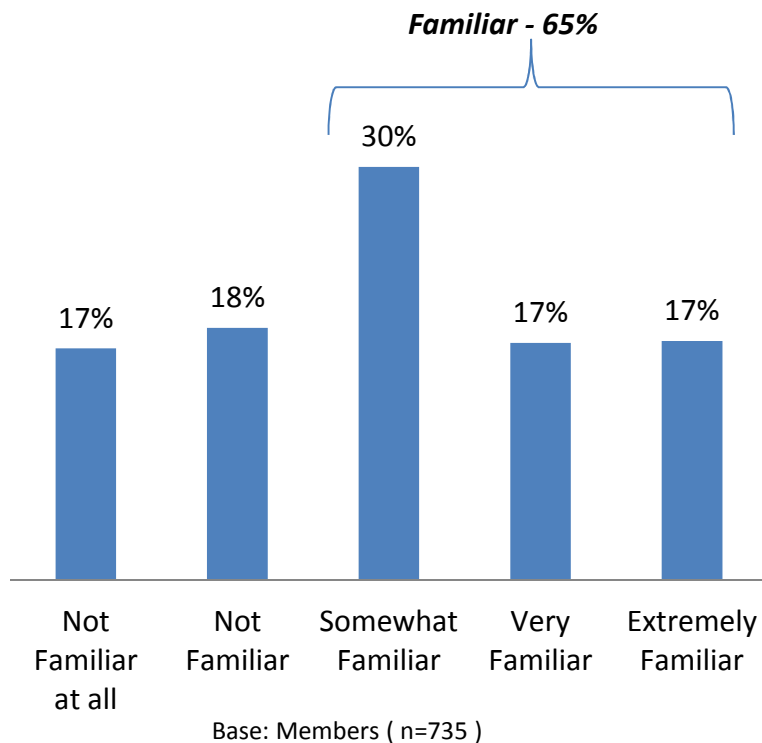
To a lesser extent (although still a majority), members agree that bill should only be implemented if other bodies like Employers and Non-union (**64%**) and Professional Associations (**62%**) are similarly required to publically disclose their financial information.



## FINANCIAL REPORTING PROCESSES CURRENTLY IN PLACE



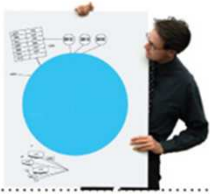
Q6. How familiar are you with the financial reporting processes currently in place for your union? Are you...



Q7. In your own words, can you describe the financial reporting processes in place for your union...

Members who are somewhat to extremely familiar with the Financial Reporting process	(n=476)
All the finances are reported at our monthly, quarterly or annually meeting	27%
All the financial information is available for the members when needed (during business hours or online)	23%
Financial statements are reported monthly, quarterly or yearly	18%
They send financial statements, reports or information every month/year	12%
All statements are reviewed by financial committee and executive board	10%
It is completely transparent or fair	8%
All financial decisions are made with the participation of the members	7%
The financial report is audited by a third party to ensure accuracy	6%
The financial report is good / satisfactory	3%
The financial report is accurate	2%
The financial reports are filed to the government	2%
Other mentions	6%
No comment / I can't / I don't know	23%

The majority (**65%**) are familiar with the financial reporting process currently in place in their union. When asked in detail, members mention that the financial information are available on a regular basis (monthly, quarterly or annually) through meetings / statements. The information is also available online or as requested by the members.



## FINANCIAL REPORTING PROCESSES CURRENTLY IN PLACE



Q7. In your own words, can you describe the financial reporting processes in place for your union...

*"First a financial statement issued once a year (mailed to members) and at monthly meetings any changes are reported and presented to members."*

*"There are financial statements (monthly and annual) made available at union meetings and one may get them by mail as well."*

*"First we get the financial statements through journals and regular updates (mailings). Then it's also available on the member's website"*

*"A financial statement is issued every month."*

*"Actually every year they send letters to us telling us how is the financial situation and the pensions."*

*"All expenses are voted on at membership meetings. The IBEW constitution and local union bylaws direct the local business managers on using members' dues. Monthly, quarterly and yearly audits are conducted and are available to all members. All bills must be approved by members and all checks must be signed by two elected officers of the local union."*

*"All financial decisions are made in monthly meetings, where all union members are invited to participate. Every monetary issue has to be passed by the members with a vote. All changes to the funds within the local have to be made at a specially called meeting. These meetings give written notice to all members, so they can make time to attend this meeting. If a member would like to find out information about a fund that they pay into, they can receive their answers from the local union hall at any time. The funds of the local union are also reviewed by elected trustees. These trustees are members of the local and are not paid for this position. The trustees review the finances of the local quarterly."*

*"All our accounts and funds are audited yearly by independent auditors. To my knowledge this information is available to the government for tax purposes and to ensure that the funds are used properly that is to say for the purpose for which they were established."*

*"All statements are reviewed by the finance committee and then it is over seen by the executive board and then they report that to the membership board."*

*"Basically every year I get a letter telling me how much money was put into my pension and when it is all done I get a statement telling me if my investments went up or down depending on the markets."*

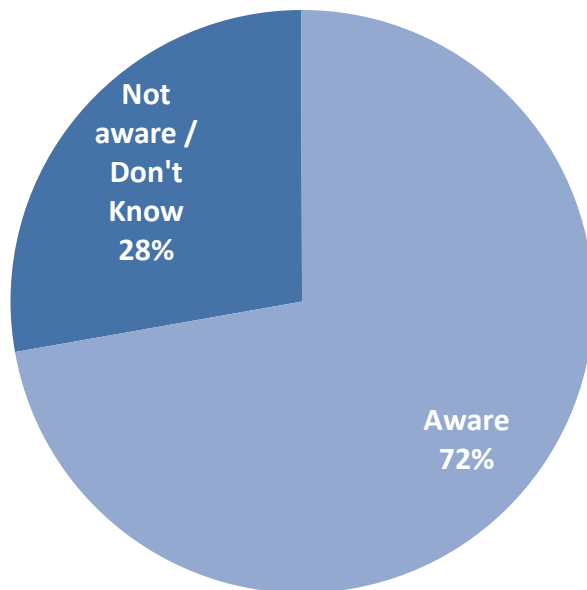
*"It is completely transparent."*



## ACCESS TO FINANCIAL INFORMATION



8. Before today, under the current rules, were you aware that any union member can request to see the financial information from their union?



Base: Members ( n=735 )

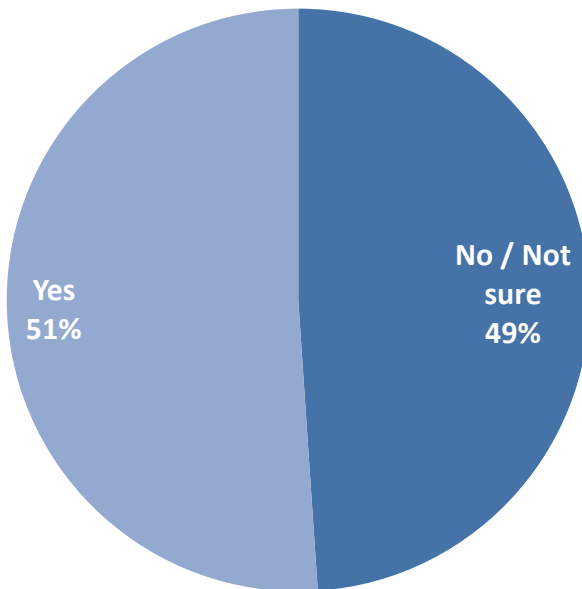
The majority (**72%**) of the union members are aware that they can request to see the financial information from their union.



## ACCESS TO INFORMATION



9. Have you ever accessed any of the reports / information regarding the financial information in your union, including getting financial information at a meeting, convention or in the newsletter, from the pension or health plan or on a members' only website?



Base: Members ( n=735 )

Half (**51%**) of the union members have accessed reports / information regarding the financial information in their union.

Trust in union leaders or regular access to financial information via meetings are the key reasons for not specifically accessing financial information. Some mention that they are not interested or that they find the process too hard.

10. Why have you not accessed reports / information regarding the financial proceedings in your union?

### Reasons

Members who have not accessed the reports	(n= 347 )
I trust my union leaders	30%
I go the meetings regularly and I get the material	15%
I am not aware of the process	23%
The process is too difficult	9%
I am not interested	23%
None of the above	17%



## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



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*Gender: You are...*

*Age: Which of the following age groups do you belong to?*

Members	Feb 2012 (n=735)
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	96%
Female	4%
<b>Age</b>	
Less than 18 years	1%
18-24 years of age	3%
25-34 years of age	18%
35-44 years of age	19%
45-54 years of age	29%
55-64 years of age	24%
65-74 years of age	7%
Average	46.4 years



## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



Q11. Which province or territory do you live in currently?

Members	Feb 2012 (n=735)
<b>Province or territory</b>	
Ontario	32%
Quebec	19%
Atlantic provinces	18%
New Brunswick	7%
Nova Scotia	7%
Newfoundland and Labrador	4%
Prince Edward Island	<1%
Alberta	11%
Prairies	8%
Saskatchewan	3%
Manitoba	4%
British Columbia	11%
Territories	1%
Yukon	1%
Nunavut	<1%



## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



Q12. How long have you been a member of this union?

Members	Feb 2012 (n=735)
<b>Number of years member of union</b>	
5 years or less	26%
Less than 1 year	4%
1 - 5	21%
6 - 10	15%
11 - 20	23%
21 - 30	15%
31 +	20%
Not sure	1%
Average	17.4 years



## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



Q13. Which trade are you qualified in?

Members	Feb 2012 (n=735)
<b>Trade</b>	
Painter and Decorator	21%
Glazier	13%
Steamfitter/Pipefitter	12%
Drywall Finishing	8%
Carpenter	7%
Plumber	7%
Brick Mason	6%
Welder	5%
Sheet Metal Worker	5%
Electrician	4%
Stone Mason	4%
Cement Mason	4%
Boilermaker	4%
Millwright	2%
Plasterer	2%
Rebar Installer	2%
Heavy Equipment Operators (Excavator, Dozer, etc.)	2%

Members	Feb 2012 (n=735)
<b>Trade Cont'd</b>	
Marble Mason	1%
Tile setter	1%
Floor layer	1%
Sprinkler System Installer	1%
Power line Technician	1%
Finisher	1%
Labourer	1%
Interior Systems Installer	1%
Insulator (Heat and Frost)	1%
Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanic	1%
Marble, Mosaic and Terrazzo Worker	1%
Pointer-Cleaner-Caulker	1%
Restoration Steeplejack	1%
Rofer	1%
Steel Erector	1%
Other	8%



## PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



Q14. How many years have you been qualified in your trade?

Members	Feb 2012 (n=735)
<b>Number of years qualified in trade</b>	
5 years or less	18%
Less than 1 year	3%
1 - 5	15%
6 - 10	13%
11 - 20	22%
21 - 30	21%
31 +	24%
Not sure	2%
Average	20.4 years

